

## Long-Acting Opioid Analgesics

### Key Questions and Inclusion Criteria

#### *Update #6*

#### Key Questions

1. What is the comparative effectiveness of different long-acting opioids in reducing pain and improving functional outcomes in adult patients being treated for chronic non-cancer pain?
2. What is the comparative effectiveness of long-acting opioids versus short-acting opioids in reducing pain and improving functional outcomes when used for treatment of adults with chronic non-cancer pain?
3. What are the comparative harms (including addiction and abuse) of different long-acting opioids in adult patients being treated for chronic non-cancer pain?
4. What are the comparative harms of long-acting opioids versus short-acting opioids in adult patients being treated for chronic non-cancer pain?
5. Are there subpopulations of patients (specifically by race, age, sex, socio-economic status type of pain, or comorbidities) with chronic non-cancer pain for which one long-acting opioid is more effective or associated with fewer harms?
6. Are there subpopulations of patients (specifically by race, age, sex, socio-economic status, type of pain, or comorbidities) with chronic non-cancer pain for which long-acting opioids are more effective or associated with fewer harms than short-acting opioids?

#### Inclusion Criteria

##### Population

Adult patients (age 18 or older) with a non-cancer pain syndrome requiring chronic use of long-acting opioid medications

##### Interventions

Long-acting opioid preparations, defined as those administered three times a day or less frequently.

Generic Name	Trade Name	Forms
Buprenorphine	Butrans	ER transdermal film
Codeine	Codeine Contin <sup>a</sup>	ER oral tablet
Dihydrocodeine	DHC Continus (U.K) <sup>b</sup>	
Fentanyl	Duragesic	ER transdermal film

Generic Name	Trade Name	Forms
Hydromorphone	Exalgo	ER oral tablet
Levorphanol <sup>c</sup>	Levo-Dromoran	Oral tablet
Methadone	Dolophine Methadose <sup>d</sup>	Oral tablet
Morphine	Avinza Kadian MS-Contin Oramorph SR	ER oral capsule ER oral capsule ER oral tablet ER oral tablet
Morphine sulfate and naltrexone hydrochloride	Embeda	ER oral capsule
Oxycodone	Oxycontin Roxicodone	ER oral tablet Oral Tablet
Oxymorphone <sup>c</sup>	Opana	ER oral tablet

ER=Extended release

<sup>a</sup>Only available in Canada

<sup>b</sup>Only available in Europe

<sup>c</sup>Not available in Canada

<sup>d</sup> Available as generic

### Effectiveness outcomes

- Pain
- Functional status

### Harms outcomes

- Withdrawals
- Withdrawals due to adverse events
- Specific adverse events (including, but not limited to, nausea, cognitive changes, constipation, addiction, abuse, death)

### Study designs

For comparative effectiveness of different long-acting opioids:

- Head-to-head controlled clinical trials comparing a long-acting opioid with another long-acting opioid.
- Placebo-controlled trials of long-acting opioids
- Good quality comparative systematic reviews

For comparative effectiveness of long-acting versus short-acting opioids:

- Head-to-head controlled clinical trials comparing a long-acting opioid with a short-acting opioid.
- Good-quality comparative systematic reviews

For comparative harms of different long-acting opioids:

- Head-to-head controlled clinical trials comparing a long-acting opioid with another long-acting opioid.
- Placebo-controlled trials of long-acting opioids

- Comparative observational studies reporting harms
- Good-quality comparative systematic reviews

For comparative harms of long-acting versus short-acting opioids:

- Head-to-head controlled clinical trials comparing an included long-acting opioid with short-acting opioid.
- Comparative observational studies of long-acting versus short-acting opioids reporting harms
- Good-quality comparative systematic reviews